

Dale Hollow Named a 'No-Discharge' Lake

Submitted by the Staff at Dale Hollow Lake

Dale Hollow Lake was designated a No Discharge lake by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) late last year near the end of the recreation season.

On October 3, 2006, the EPA posted in the Federal Register a Notice of Determination that Dale Hollow Lake qualifies as a No Discharge Zone. The designation became effective on that date with that act of publication and several agencies deemed the action a great success in the current and future preservation of Dale Hollow's aquatic resource.

"This new designation is quite a milestone," said Willow Grove Resort Owner Darren Shell. "It allows marinas a legal avenue to force compliance, replacing what was once only a friendly agreement between dock operators. It's a designation we've always wanted but could not legally enforce until now."

Such designation supports several Corps Environmental Operating Principles; Achieve Environmental Sustainability, Consider Environmental Consequences of Corps programs and Act Accordingly, Accept Accountability and Responsibility under the law for activities and decisions, and Mitigate Impacts to the Environment.

EPA and the Corps was and still is being provided invaluable assistance by both the Dale Hollow Lake Marina Association and the Friends of Dale Hollow Lake, Inc.

The Friends are currently working on a designation sticker to acknowledge those vessels which are compliant. The 'Friends' plan to also help Dale Hollow staff educate the boating public. Resource Manager Ronnie Smith said this landmark designation as a No Discharge lake will provide for the future protection of Dale Hollow water quality.

"Dale Hollow is unique and its resources are worthy of our best management and conservation measures," said Smith. "I offer my sincerest thanks as we all partner in this initiative that is vital to protecting water quality for future generations."

The Resource Management Staff at Dale Hollow Lake long ago insisted that the pristine reservoir should be considered a unique environmental and economic resource. Early in 2004, the staff began the detailed process of seeking the reclassification of Dale Hollow from a 'Discharge' lake to a 'No Discharge' lake to prohibit the discharge of wastewater from vessels on the Lake.

Dale Hollow, with its mountainous setting, protected natural shorelines, outstanding water quality, unique beauty, and a sport fishery of national significance ranks 19th in the nation among Corps of Engineers lakes, with more than 3.3 million visitors annually. These visitors add approximately \$120 million annually to the regional tourism industry, the number one industry in north-central Tennessee and south-central Kentucky.

The increasing popularity of Dale Hollow Lake, however, has also brought with it a potential environmental threat to the long-term water quality of this 27,700-acre lake. Specifically, the lake is now one of the most popular boating lakes in America with more than 1,000 houseboats, sailboats, and yachts currently moored on and sailing its waters. All agencies realized it is imperative that all such vessels capable of generating wastewater be managed properly.